



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
Sept. 27, 2004

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### **National Adult Immunization Awareness Week Observed** ***State Health Department Highlights Importance of Influenza Vaccinations***

BISMARCK, N.D. – In observance of National Adult Immunization Awareness Week, the North Dakota Department of Health is highlighting the importance of influenza vaccinations this flu season.

National Adult Immunization Awareness Week is held September 26 through October 2. This year's theme is ***Immunization: Building a Path to a Healthy Tomorrow***.

“Immunizations are a safe and effective method of preventing many diseases, including influenza,” said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. “Influenza season is fast approaching. National Adult Immunization Awareness Week is a good time to remind everyone that the best way to prevent the flu is to get a flu shot.”

The Department of Health recommends that the following people be vaccinated against the flu:

- People age 50 and older
- People who have the following chronic illnesses:
  - Heart disease
  - Diabetes
  - Kidney disease
  - Asthma
  - Cancer
  - Children receiving long-term aspirin therapy
  - HIV/AIDS
- Health-care and long-term care employees
- Pregnant women

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*Visit the health department home page at [www.ndhealth.gov](http://www.ndhealth.gov).*

- Children age 6 to 23 months
- Contacts of any of the high-risk groups listed above
- Anyone who wants to prevent themselves from getting the flu

“The flu shot will not cause the flu; instead, it could mean the difference between life and death,” Dwelle said. “Unfortunately, about 400 North Dakotans die every year from flu-related complications. Being vaccinated prevents people from getting the flu and also prevents people from spreading the flu to others.”

While some public and private health clinics across the state have received influenza vaccine, others have not. For information about flu vaccine availability, people can contact their local public health unit or health-care provider.

Each year throughout the influenza season, the Department of Health conducts influenza surveillance activities, including reports of disease activity from health-care providers, laboratories, schools and long-term care facilities. This information is used to monitor the severity of the disease and to identify any unusual disease activity.

For more information about influenza, contact Heather Weaver or Tracy Miller, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378 or visit [www.ndflu.com](http://www.ndflu.com). The website will be updated with information about flu activity every Tuesday afternoon throughout influenza season.

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*Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at [www.nddohpressroom.gov](http://www.nddohpressroom.gov).*